

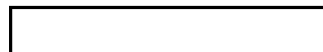
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30 September 1955



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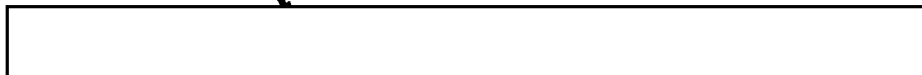
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DIA and DOS review(s) completed.

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CONTENTS

25X1



**2. EGYPT REPORTED PROMOTING SYRIAN AND
LEBANESE PURCHASES OF SOVIET ARMS (page 4).**

25X1



**4. BONN'S DEFENSE BUDGET INDICATES REARMAMENT
SLOWER THAN PLANNED (page 6).**

25X1

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2. EGYPT REPORTED PROMOTING SYRIAN AND LEBANESE PURCHASES OF SOVIET ARMS

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The Egyptian military attaché in Damascus has recently approached military officials in Syria and Lebanon regarding the purchase of arms from the

Soviet Union, according

to the American army attaché.

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Comment

Egypt's interest in obtaining military equipment for Syria

and Lebanon would be in line with its desire to maintain its leadership in the Arab world.

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Press reports indicate that an Egyptian delegation is to spend three days in Syria on its way to Prague to discuss arms for Egypt. One of the delegates mentioned has headed economic missions to Eastern Europe and Moscow.

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4, BONN'S DEFENSE BUDGET INDICATES REARMAMENT SLOWER THAN PLANNED

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Despite Chancellor Adenauer's recent public statement in support of rapid rearmament, the position of his government on defense expenditures makes

it appear that the prospective build-up will be slow, according to Ambassador Conant. On 28 September the Bonn Foreign Ministry notified the American embassy that the government intends to spend approximately 2.3 billion dollars annually on the new army and that this sum will probably not be increased until after the 1957 federal elections.

Conant observes that such a program would leave a large gap between Bonn's total defense bill and the outlays necessary for the planned three-year build-up.

Comment

Discussions on the rate and magnitude of German rearmament are now being held in Bonn and in Paris in connection with the NATO annual review. Bonn's Defense Ministry, with Adenauer's ostensible support, strongly advocates a three-year build-up. The chancellor, however, has not opposed the actions of the Finance Ministry, which is intent on stretching out the build-up period to five or six years so as to keep defense expenditures low.

Bonn's contemplated expenditures are less proportionately than the defense expenditures of other major NATO countries.